

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0673

CONFIDENTIAL STOCKHOLM 2209

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, SW

SUBJ: MARQUIS CHILDS' VISIT

1. COLUMNIST MARQUIS CHILDS AND MRS. CHILDS LUNCHEDED WITH CHARGE MAY 20 AT CLOSE OF TEN-DAY VISIT TO SWEDEN. HIS COMMENTS, ALTHOUGH MOST OF THEM WILL PROBABLY APPEAR IN HIS COLUMNS, MAY BE OF SOME INTEREST, PARTICULARLY HIS INTERVIEW WITH PRIME MINISTER FALLDIN AND HIS CONCERN ABOUT SWEDEN IN GENERAL.

2. CHILDS KNOWS SWEDEN WELL AND IS FOND OF THE COUNTRY, HAVING DONE THE CLASSIC STUDY, "SWEDEN: THE MIDDLE WAY", IN THE LATE THIRTIES. HE IS UNDER CONTRACT TO DO A NEW BOOK ON SWEDEN, AND WAS HERE LAST SEPTEMBER FOR THE ELECTIONS. HIS RETURN VISIT WAS TO GET A FIX ON SWEDEN UNDER THE NEW GOVERMENT, BUT HIS TIMING WAS BAD, SINCE ECONOMIC PROBLEMS AND LABOR TURMOIL ARE BUBBLING. CHILDS HAD PLANNED TO STAY FIVE WEEKS OR SO, BUT CUT HIS VISIT SHORT AFTER SEEING HOW MUCH DISLOCATION THERE WAS. (IN FACT SOME OF HIS GOS CONTACTS ADVISED HIM TO CURTAIL HIS PRESENT STAY AND RETURN IN THE FALL; THEY OBVIOUSLY FELT HIS IMPRESSIONS WOULD BE BETTER THEN.)

3. AS AN OLD ADMIRER OF SWEDEN, CHILDS WAS TAKEN ABACK BY THE DEPTH OF THE ECONOMIC PREOCCUPATIONS AND THE SERIOUSNESS OF THE LABOR DISPUTES. THE FIRST COUPLE OF DAYS HE WAS SOMEWHAT STUNNED, BUT AFTER SEEING MANY OLD FRIENDS AND GETTING A

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BROADER PICTURE, HE BAGAN TO SEE THAT THINGS WERE NOT SO BLACK AS HE AT FIRST FEARED. HE SEEMS TO BE LEAVING WITH SOME CONCERN ABOUT THE FUTURE, ESPECIALLY ON THE ECONOMIC FRONT, BUT STILL HOPING SWEDEN WILL FIND WAYS TO SOLVE ITS PROBLEMS.

4. CHILDS' FORTY-FIVE MINUTE INTERVIEW WITH FALLDIN MAY 19 WAS OF INTEREST. HE SAID THAT NEARLY THE WHOLE MEETING WAS

ON NUCLEAR MATTERS, AND CHILDS GAVE CHARGE THE IMPRESSION THAT ON THIS SUBJECT FALLDIN IS REALLY A TRUE BELIEVER: HE ABHORS THE IDEA OF A NUCLEAR FUTURE, BELIEVES SWEDEN MUST NOT MARCH IN THAT DIRECTION, AND HAD RATHER BE RIGHT THAN PRIME MINISTER. CHILDS SAID FALLDIN SPOKE LAVISHLY OF PRESIDENT CARTER'S NUCLEAR POLICY, ESPECIALLY HIS STAND AGAINST REPROCESSING AND THE SEARCH FOR ALTERNATIVES TO PLUTONIUM. (FALLDIN SEEMS ABOVE, OR PERHAPS IMPERVIOUS TO, THE CONCERNS GOS OFFICIALS ARE EXPRESSING TO US ABOUT THE SHORT-TERM EFFECTS OF US NUCLEAR POLICY ON SWEDEN. SEE STOCKHOLM 2178.) FALLDIN TOLD CHILDS THERE WAS GROWING POPULAR SUPPORT FOR HIS POSITION ON NUCLEAR ENERGY IN SWEDEN, AND IF A REFERENDUM WAS HELD HE THOUGHT A MAJORITY WOULD BACK HIM. ASKED ABOUT ALTERNATIVES, FALLDIN WAS REALISTIC ABOUT THE SLIGHT HELP TO BE GOT FROM SUCH THINGS AS SOLAR ENERGY; HE TOLD CHILDS THE ONLY SOLUTION WAS CONSERVATION, LESS ENERGY USE -- AND HE SAID THE GRAPHS ON ENERGY USE WERE ALREADY FALLING BELOW WHAT THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS HAD PREDICTED. CHILDS SAID FALLDIN ACKNOWLEDGED THAT IF THE SEVEN PLANNED ADDITIONAL NUCLEAR PLANTS WERE NOT BUILD IN SWEDEN, THERE WOULD BE ENORMOUS CAPITAL LOSSES, AND ENERGY MAKE-UP PROBLEMS; BUT HE WAS PREPARED TO FACE THIS. ON THE POLITICAL FRONT, HE SEEMED PESSIMISTIC ABOUT BRINGING THE THREE COALITION PARTIES TOGETHER ON NUCLEAR ENERGY. HE TOLD CHILDS THAT SPECIAL ELECTIONS MIGHT HAVE TO BE HELD IN 1978, AND IF THEY WERE, HE WAS NOT AT ALL SURE HE COULD WIN. BUT HE SAID THAT OVER THE LONGER TERM, HE WAS CONVINCED OF THE RIGHTNESS OF HIS NUCLEAR POLICY.

5. MR. CHILDS SHOULD BE PROTECTED AS THE SOURCE OF THIS
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INFORMATION.
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